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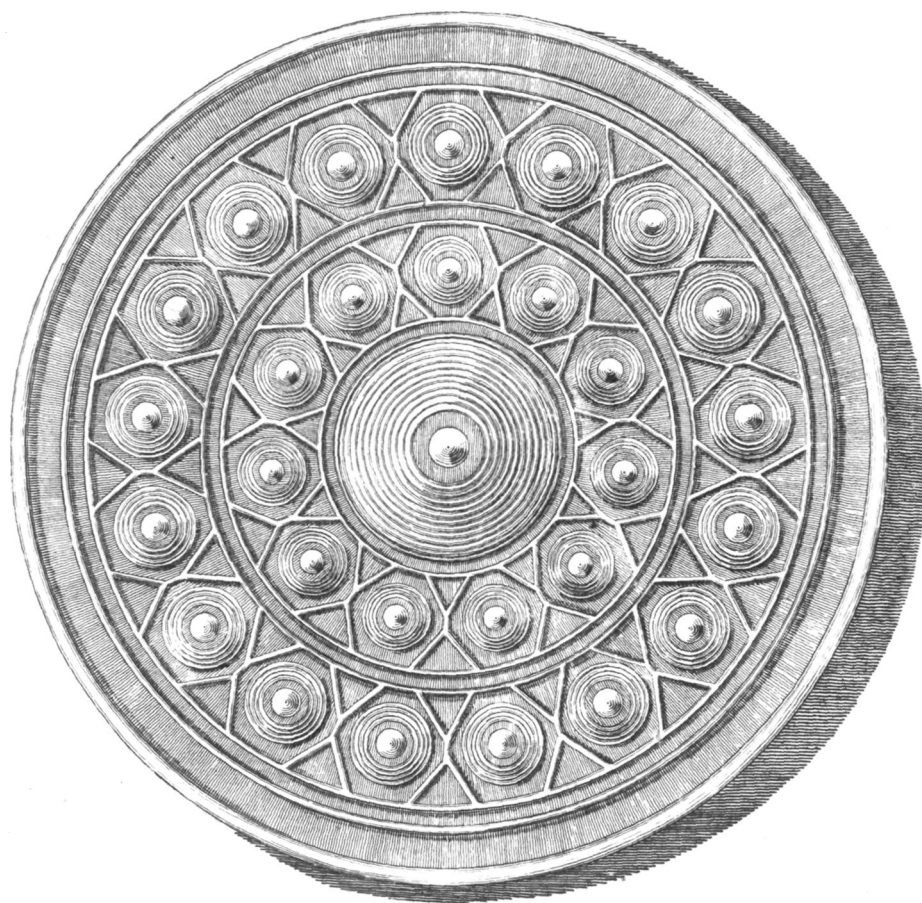
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ACCOUNT *of four* CIRCULAR PLATES *of*
GOLD *found in* IRELAND. By RALPH OUSLEY,
M. R. I. A.


I N the month of October 1795, a peasant near Enniscorthy in the county of Wexford turned up with his plough four plates of solid gold, perfectly round, and of very neat workmanship; he sold them to a Mr. Gurly of Enniscorthy, silversmith, who melted two of them down and sent the other two for sale to the Earl of Charlemont, President of our Academy. The four were exactly alike, quite circular and four inches and three quarters in diameter, very thin, weighing about one ounce each, ornamented handsomely at one side and quite plain at the other, except a kind of cap or screw for the purpose of being affixed to a handle. The annexed drawing, being exactly of the size and figure of one of them, will convey a better idea of these ancient articles than I can pretend to give of them—there being nothing like them in

Read March
11, 1797

Harris,

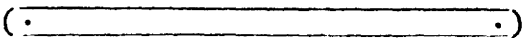
Harris, Smith, Vallancey, Gough or any other of our writers on antiquities, I thought it worth while to form some little account of these curious antiques, though I can by no means ascertain their antiquity, or determine their use.

FROM the many articles of gold almost daily discovered in this kingdom it will not appear unreasonable to suppose with our ancient historians, that Ireland once possessed mines of that precious metal, or else must have had a considerable traffick with some nation abounding in that commodity.

A FEW years ago Mr. Samuel Johns, a working silversmith in Limerick, bought a very curious piece of thin gold of this shape  and of an exceeding fine quality, supposed to be a shield or breast plate: he got it from a labourer who found it in the parish of Feakle and county of Clare—it weighed upwards of twelve ounces; he gave three pounds eight shillings and three pence per ounce for it, and sold it afterwards to Mr. Wm. D. Moore, Goldsmith in Dublin, for four pounds an ounce.

ANOTHER silversmith or merchant of Limerick (Mr. Wm. Power) bought a very beautiful crown that weighed above one pound of pure gold, with a place for a precious stone in the center, most elegantly worked, and found near Shronehill, county Tipperary; it was unfortunately broke up for rings and toys, but has been seen by several of my acquaintances.

ANOTHER

ANOTHER ancient ornament (I suppose) I met with a few weeks ago ; it was fifteen inches long, very thin and narrow, about a quarter of an inch broad, of fine gold and worth about a guinea, the ends have small holes in them to admit a thread thro' and are of this shape ()

Such another was found a few years since near Ballinrobe, and was I believe in the possession of the late Judge Hellen.

I AM persuaded if curious gentlemen in our different provinces would apply themselves attentively to the enquiry, and reward liberally the finders of gold and silver antiques, a number of very curious articles would soon be brought to light, to the amusement of the literati, and the elucidation of our antiquities.

Limerick, January 25, 1797.